

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ's) – revised 09/09/2014



1. Q: How can I order a birth certificate?

A:

- By mail: Vital Records, P O Box 95065, Lincoln, NE 68509 - [download application](#)
- In person: 1033 "O" Street, Suite 130, Lincoln, NE (in Gold's Building located at 11th & "O" Streets)
- By phone*: Emergency Line (emergency requests only): 402.471.6440
- Internet*: nebraska.gov/hhs/birthcert/birthapp.php
(* no genealogy requests)

2. Q: How much does a certificate cost?

A:

- Birth Certificates are \$17.00
- Death, Marriage, and Divorce Certificates are \$16.00
- Birth Certificates ordered on our Emergency Line cost: \$40.00 (includes S&H by UPS)
- Death, Marriage, Divorce ordered on our Emergency Line each cost \$39.00 (includes S&H by UPS)

3. Q: Do I need photo identification?

A: Yes. A **current** government-issued photo identification such as your Driver's License, State ID, US Military ID, Passport, etc. is required. If you do not have a photo ID, please contact our office at 402.471.2871.

4. Q: Who is eligible to obtain a certified copy of a birth certificate?

A:

- The person named on the birth certificate
- A parent whose name is listed on the birth record of the person named on the birth record
- Spouse
- An Attorney for a legal reason
- Guardian with proof of guardianship
- Legal representative who provides a copy of documents of representation
- Certificate holder's adult children
- For other relationships, please contact our office at 402.471.2871.

5. Q: Identification Requirements – application **must** be submitted with copies of either A or B:

A. One (1) of the following forms of valid photo-ID: (**ID must be current**)

- Driver license
- State issued non-driver photo-ID card
- Passport
- U.S. Military issued photo-ID

B. Two (2) of the following showing the applicant's name, address, signature:

- Utility or telephone bills
- Certified copy of school record, envelope must be sealed, Vital Records staff will open envelope
- Signed Social Security card
- Department of Corrections ID card or release documents
- Copy of recent paystub

For other documentations please contact our office at 402.471.2871.

6. Q: How long will it take to get my certificate?

A:

- By regular mail: 10-14 working days after application has been entered into our system
- By Internet: 7-10 working days after application has been entered into our system
- By phone: (Emergency Line only) delivered next day by UPS-Next Day Air Saver
- Priorities/Express: Mailed out the same day received. If priority or express services are requested, a pre-paid envelope must accompany the application
- In person at Vital Records office: 10-15 minutes

7. Q: How do I make a correction to a certificate?

A: Call the Vital Records Office for detailed information and necessary forms at 402.471.0918

8. Q: Can Hospital Birth Clerks do corrections on a child's birth certificate?

A: Yes. Hospital Birth Clerks can do any corrections on a child's birth certificate template before it has been submitted to Vital Records. After a certificate is registered and numbered by Vital Records, the Hospital's Birth Clerk can no longer make changes. Corrections must then be handled by the amendment desk. If the record has been submitted to Vital Records but is not yet numbered, the Vital Records Birth Desk may reject it back to hospital for any necessary corrections.

9. Q: Can given names or surnames be separated by commas, periods, etc.?

A: No

10. Q: Can given names or surnames be hyphenated?

A: Yes

11. Q: The child was born at home and mother and child were transported to the hospital. Can the hospital's birth clerk help parents complete the birth certificate?

A: Yes. In the section where the facility name and address are requested you will need to enter the actual address of where the child was born.

12. Q: If parents were married outside the State of Nebraska (foreign country) is it considered legal?

A: Yes

13. Q: Do new parents get a free certified copy of their child's birth certificate?

A: No. They must submit an application, search fee (\$12.00 each), and copy of the requesting parent's current photo identification. For identification requirements, please review answers to question # 5. The hospital may provide a keepsake copy of the birth certificate, but this is not a legal document.

14. Q: If mother and father are not married to each other, can father's name be added to certificate?

A: Yes it can be, if the proper Acknowledgement of Paternity form is completed and signed by both parents in front of a notary public. The hospital will send this form to Vital Records for verification and Vital Records will register the certificate once the Acknowledgement of Paternity is received.

15. Q: Can information on an Acknowledgement of Paternity be crossed out or white out?

A: No. Since this is a legal document integrity of the information is vital when used in a court of law.

16. Q: Can I get a birth certificate resulting in stillbirth certificate?

A: Only parents whose names appear on registered information can request this kind of certificate. It cannot be requested for genealogy or family history purposes.

17. Q: I was born in another state. Can the Nebraska Vital Records office provide a copy of my birth certificate?

A: No. You must contact the Vital Records Bureau of the State where you were born. Only events that occurred in the State of Nebraska are registered with Vital Records of Nebraska. This link will provide you with information on other states. [cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm)

18. Q: How can I tell if the certificate I received is a certified copy?

A: If you ordered the certificate from the Nebraska Vital Records office in Lincoln, it is printed on a pink weave paper. The embossed, raised seal will be on the upper right corner of the paper in the certifier's signature area.

19. Q: I ordered my passport, and the passport agency is telling me I need a statement on the back of the certificate. What does this mean?

A: In the state of Nebraska parents have up to a year to register the birth of their child. If the elapsed time of the date of birth and the date of registration is longer than a year, the passport agency may request the statement on the back of the certificate for verification.

20. Q: I ordered my certificate from Vital Records, and when I got it did not have the embossed seal. What should I do?

A: You can mail the certificate back to our office along with all other correspondence and request that the seal be placed on the certificate. We will do that at no extra charge.

21. Q: What if the mother and/or father has a Social Security number but refuses to provide it?

A: The birth certificate cannot be filed.

22. Q: The child was born alive and then died. The parents were not married at the time of birth. Can they still complete an Acknowledgement of Paternity even though the child is deceased?

A: Yes

23. Q: If parents do not have Social Security number, can I still complete the birth record?

A: A Social Security number is not required if a number has never been issued to them.

24. Q: Will the parents' Social Security number(s) appear on copies of the child's birth certificate?

A: The Social Security number is not a part of the legal portion of the birth certificate, and therefore will not appear on any copies issued.

25. Q: A parent may ask: Why must I provide my social security number?

A: The social security number is used for enforcement of child support orders in Nebraska. The number can be given to the Department of Social Services for purposes permitted under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. The number will not be used for any other reason and is not a part of the birth certificate.

26. Q: Do I need to place the notary seal on the yellow page of the Acknowledgement of Paternity?

A: No, you only need to place your notary seal on the white page. Make sure all information entered on the white page transfers legibly to the yellow page.

27. Q: Can a father enter his married name on the birth certificate instead of his birth name on line 13?

A: No, unfortunately the Nebraska birth certificate does not contain lines for the father to enter both of his names, birth name and married name like mothers do. We have seen cases where fathers have assumed the mother's last name after marriage. The father can enter his birth name (Line 13) and then enter his legal name on Line 15a if he wishes for both of his names to appear on the birth certificate.

28. Q: Can a father under the age of 18 sign the Acknowledgement of Paternity?

A: Yes he can. Parents of any age may sign the form. However, if the father is under the age of 19 the hospital clerk may suggest he talk to his parents before signing the Acknowledgement of Paternity.

29. Q: Can Hospital Birth clerks file a home birth?

A: Yes they can. The worksheet is available in the system just as if you were completing a hospital birth. For any questions or concerns please contact the Vital Records Birth Desk 402.471.0907.

30. Q: Should the birthing hospital seek out or locate the alleged father to have him sign the Acknowledgement of Paternity?

A: No. The birthing hospital or its representatives are not required to seek out or locate the alleged father who is not readily identifiable or available to sign the Acknowledgement of Paternity.

31. Q: Are hospitals required to provide single parents with Acknowledgement of Paternity information?

A: Yes. Under Nebraska law, hospitals are responsible for giving unmarried parents the opportunity to establish paternity legally.

32. Q: If parents do not sign the Acknowledgement of Paternity at the hospital, can they complete it later?

A: Yes they can. They will need to complete an Acknowledgement of Paternity form at Vital Records in Lincoln, at the Health Department in Omaha, or with the Department of Health and Human Services in Lincoln, Norfolk, Hastings, Grand Island, Lexington, Scottsbluff, North Platte, Dakota City, Fremont, Broken Bow or Fairbury.

It is best if the form is completed at the Vital Records office. This enables the Vital Records office to compare the form with the birth certificate to ensure its accuracy.

33. Q: If parents express their interest in obtaining genetic testing, should they complete the Acknowledgement of Paternity at the hospital?

A: No. If they are considering obtaining genetic testing, they should not complete the paternity form. The Acknowledgment of Paternity form is a legal document. Once signed and notarized, paternity is legally established sixty days after the last notarized signature on the form. After genetic testing is obtained, parents can complete the form with the Vital Records office.